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The Green Thumb

A Newsletter of Extension Horticultural Activities and Events
For York County Extension Volunteers

Vol. 5, Issue 12
December, 2004

Calendar of Events

Jan 11, 9:30-11:30 am	Monthly Programming Meeting, St. Lukes Methodist Church (all Master Gardeners welcome)
Jan 12, 9:30 – 12:00 n	Advanced Pruning Training, Location to be announced (for Master Gardeners)
Jan 18, 9:30 – 11:30 am	Practice Pruning Session, Location to be announced
Jan 19, 12:00 – 1:00 pm	WHRO 89.5 FM Gardening HearSay
Jan 20, 9:30 – 11:30 am	Practice Pruning Session, Location to be announced
Jan 26, 9:30 – 11:30 am	Practice Pruning Session, Location to be announced
Jan 21 – 23, 2005	Virginia Flower and Garden Show, VA Beach Pavilion, VA Beach (Fee - Scholarships available)
Jan 29, 10:00 – 12:00 n	Homeowner Fruit Pruning Day, Glebe Road, Tabb
Jan 31 – Feb 3, 2005	2005 Mid-Atlantic Horticulture Short Course, Oceanfront Ramada Plaza Resort Conference Center, VA Beach (Fee – Scholarship available – see Page 4)

Thursdays Work/Learn Day in the Learning Garden 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

For additions/corrections to the Calendar of Events contact Jody at 890-4940 or Byrdie Hawley at 898-6175, e-mail: dhawley@erols.com. The deadline for the Green Thumb is ALWAYS the 15th of the month, no exception.

E-mail changes: If you have changes to any of the methods of communication, please notify Jody. Jody will pass the word. We want to keep in contact with you. These changes will be posted to the weekly e-mails and will be in the Green Thumb.

Master Gardener Mission Statement

Our mission, as trained volunteers in partnership with the York County, Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent, is to provide horticultural educational opportunities to the public through research-based horticultural programs and activities to enhance our environment, lives and community.

www.ext.vt.edu

Extension is a joint program of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state and local governments.

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless, of race, color, religion, sex, age, veteran status, national origin, disability, or political affiliation. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

Notes from Jim

This month is filled with activities surrounding friends, family, and special gatherings. My wish is that you have a joyful and full holiday season. At our programming meeting on December 14, we will conduct our normal business beginning at 9:30 am. Marie Butler, Horticulturalist from the Norfolk Zoo will be our guest speaker at 10:30 am. She will present "I have elephants in the garden, so what's your problem?" Marie comes to us with wonderful recommendations and it promises to be educational as well as entertaining. Please bring a covered dish to share so that we all might linger after the program.

Lots of pesticide classes are being taught during December, January and February. I have put them on the calendar as well as on our website. Please pass these on to others who you know that might want the information.

Thank you to all of you that are scheduled to come in to the office during the Holidays to help out while I am out of the state and Jody is on medical leave. For Interns, it is a good opportunity to respond to questions and have sufficient time and resources to respond to these calls accurately. There is a slow pace in the office and you are able to look around to become familiar with the resources.



Master Gardeners' Christmas Get Together

On Tuesday, December 14, 9:30-11:30 am, the Master Gardeners' will enjoy a Christmas celebration at St Lukes' Methodist Church. All Master Gardeners are welcome. Please bring a covered dish or some kind of finger food that all can enjoy. See you there. Hank Scheele.



Holiday Closing

The York County Extension Office will be closed during the following dates:

Thursday, December 23 (Close at 12:00 noon)
Friday, December 24
Friday, December 31

Jim will not be in the office December 21 through January 5.

Jody will be on medical leave from December 13 until approximately January 31.

The Green Thumb Newsletter is prepared for York
County Extension Volunteers by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Orband".

James M. Orband
Extension Agent, ANR
And
Dianne Taylor, Extension Volunteer





New Website for York County Junior Master Gardener Program

We are proud to announce that the York County Junior Master Gardener Program has a new website. You can access the site from the Welcome page of our website: <http://www.yorkcounty.gov/vce>. Just click on the Ladybug.

We would like to thank Heather Myer (Debbie Wolfe's daughter) for creating this fun site for York County's youth.

The York County Junior Master Gardener Program is currently in 3 Elementary Schools. It is a huge hit with teachers, parents, and best of all, the KIDS!

Congratulations to Barb Dunbar, Debbie Wolfe, Janine Casey, Clare Britcher, Cheryl Guardia, Harry Haley, Sheryl Roberts, and all the other volunteers that have made this program such a success! Jody Painter



Moderators Needed for the Mid Atlantic Horticultural Short Course

The Mid Atlantic Horticultural Short Course will be held Jan 31-Feb 3, 2005. This horticulture training, presented by The Virginia Horticultural Foundation, is a comprehensive educational program with one, two, three and four-day tracks. Courses are specially designed by national and regional experts in the horticulture industry. Educational credits are given for many of the various horticulture disciplines. Workshops with hands-on training and all day in-depth sessions are available. Some of the sessions are held off site to enhance the learning environment.

The short course will be conducted at the Ramada Plaza Resort Oceanfront, 5700 Atlantic Avenue, Virginia Beach, VA. The contact for room reservations is jjohnsonramada@aol.com. For complete information on schedules, courses, instructors, registration forms, and so forth, see our web site at www.MAHSC.org.

We are looking for volunteers to work as moderators. Moderators will be assigned one day of moderator duties, but can attend the rest of the short course including the new Residential Gardening Concepts program on Thursday for the reduced fee. We will try to match the moderator assignments to the person's program selections. Moderators are expected to attend a brief orientation and training session Jan. 11th. Questions? Contact Mike Andurczyk michaelandurczyk@yahoo.com or Laurie Fox ljfox@vt.edu.



Program Flowchart

I have met with all of the 2004 graduates and I have inserted the interns into coordinators roles. Jody is sorting the Active Master Gardener responses and constructing a roster. A DRAFT copy of the 2005 YC MG Roster will be mailed in mid December. This gives everyone an opportunity to verify that information is still correct. The 2005 Extension Horticultural Flow Chart will be mailed with the January 2005 Green Thumb. Along with the flow chart this year, we will include a listing of Master Gardeners and the jobs that they signed up for. This will allow you to have this information ready in your hand. Thank you all for agreeing to perform the jobs in this program. It is an ambitious program and it runs well because of your cooperative and dedicated volunteer efforts. I look forward to working with all of you to serve the citizens of York County. Many have returned the volunteer form- Thanks!!! Those that have not returned the form, please get it to us soon.



Coventry Junior Master Gardening Program

The Coventry Junior Master Gardening Program is in need of a few more "regulars" to assist with program activities. My goal is to have two master gardeners per table and so far I have not reached that goal. We meet twice monthly on Wednesday afternoons from 3:15 - 4:30. Our remaining meeting dates are as follows:

January 5th & 19th, February 2nd & 16th, March 2nd, 16th & 30th, April 13th, 27th, and May 4th. We will break at that point for SOL's and possibly schedule two additional meeting dates.

If you could help, I would really appreciate it. Just let me know what dates you are available so I can put you in! Thanks so much, Barb Dunbar....766-2174



2005 CNU Garden Symposium

I am the VCE Master Gardener Coordinator/Representative to the 2005 Garden Symposium at Christopher Newport University scheduled for Apr 16, 2005. As such, I am responsible for getting volunteers to be moderators for each of the speakers. Two moderators are needed for each of the six speakers. I am also asking for an alternate volunteer for each of the speakers in case someone is unable to moderate when the event takes place. Moderators will attend free including the lunch and refreshments. I still need at least 4 more moderators.

Moderators will perform the following duties.

The Garden Symposium Master Gardener moderators will be the point of contact for the symposium for each assigned speaker, primarily on the day of the event.

Prior to the event, each speaker will coordinate topics, handouts, audio/visual needs, room requirements, special needs, etc. with the committee. On the day of the event, the Master Gardener moderators will ensure proper room accommodations, help set up and coordinate/trouble-shoot needs for any audio/visual use, arrange room as required, and generally support each assigned speaker. Prior to each topic session, the moderator will introduce the speaker to the class with a biography provided by the speaker. After each class, the moderator will ensure that all class evaluations (which they pass out at the beginning of the class) are collected and returned to the committee at the end of the day. After all the class sessions are over, the moderator assists the speaker's exit, returns the room to original condition, and secures the room and all audio/visual items. I am the point of contact for all the moderators. You will have communication from me for your support of the speakers. Anything that your moderators need to support their speakers, that you cannot get, you can contact me. The speakers will be told to meet at the registration table on the morning of the event. They will meet the assigned moderator at that time, get room assignments, verify audio/visual arrangements, and proceed to their respective class assignments to prepare for sessions.

This should be an absolutely wonderful event and I know you will enjoy working on it. If you want to volunteer, please call me, Marna C. Brumback, VCE Master Gardener Coordinator, at 532-9035.



Educational Opportunities

Two great educational opportunities occur in January that you might want to put onto your calendar.

January 21 - 23 / The Virginia Flower and Garden Show www.vafgs.org

January 31 – February 3 / Mid-Atlantic Horticultural Short Course www.phcv.org

These educational programs will expose you to a broad array of classes, professional contacts, and give you a feel for the direction of horticulture in the Tidewater Area. The Flower and Garden Show is held at the Virginia Beach Pavilion. The Mid Atlantic Horticultural Conference will be held at the Oceanfront Ramada Plaza Resort Conference Center. I trust that you will consider attendance to these events. For more information and a schedule of classes go to their websites for details.

I encourage attendance at these trainings and this goes towards your continuing training if you are a master gardener. To further encourage attendance, I will pay half of your registration fee. These funds are made available through the local budget provided to us by the York County Board of Supervisors. The Board values the continuing education of our volunteers. The other option that you have for payment of your registration fee is to sign up to be a moderator during the week. You can contact Mike Andruzcyk: MikeAatNBG@aol.com, or call at 757-441-5893. Details on page 3.

In order to receive the scholarship you must:

1. Attend the full day of the conference.
 2. Meet the deadline to turn your registration form into the Office by December 17. Include the balance at the time you submit your application. The application is available on line at www.phcv.org
 3. Write a brief review for submission to the Green Thumb.
 4. Send a Thank You note to your Board member indicating the value of this conference for your education.
- Please consider either of these trainings. I hope that one or both might fit into your calendar.



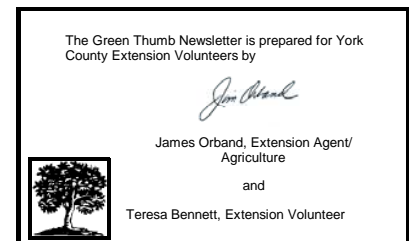
Selecting a Great Christmas Tree

Some types of trees make better Christmas trees than others. Scotch pine, white pine and Fraser fir have excellent needle retention and will last for several weeks in the average home. Spruces have fair to poor retention and may start to lose needles within a couple of weeks. White pine and Fraser fir are excellent for fragrance. Balsam fir, White fir and Douglas fir are also very good. Scotch pine and the spruces have good fragrance. For color, the most common Christmas tree species, Scotch pine, can vary greatly in foliage color. Some strains of Scotch pine lose much of their green color and need to be sprayed with a dye. Others have wonderful dark green color throughout the winter. Fraser fir, Colorado blue spruce and Douglas fir generally have excellent color for the Christmas season.

Here are some do's and don't for selecting your tree:



Don't place your tree near heat sources such as TVs, fireplaces, radiators and air ducts.





Do measure the height and width of the space you have available for the tree. Take a tape measure to measure your tree before you purchase it.



Do buy trees early before the best trees have been sold. Ask the retailer whether his trees are delivered once at the beginning of the season or are they delivered at different times during the selling season. Remember that trees sold on retail lots in urban areas may have come from out of state and may have been exposed to drying winds in transit. They may have been cut weeks earlier.



Do choose a fresh tree. A fresh tree will have a healthy green appearance with few browning needles. Needles should be flexible and not fall off if you run a branch through your hand. Raise the tree a few inches off the ground and drop it on the butt end. Green needles should not drop off the tree. It is normal for a few inner brown needles to drop off.



Do choose a tree that fits where it is to be displayed. A tree displayed in front of a large window should look good from all sides. A tree displayed against a wall need only look good from three sides. A tree with two good sides would work well in a corner. Usually, the more perfect a tree, the more it costs.



Do be sure the base of the tree is straight and 6-8 inches long so it will fit easily into the stand.



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL MASTER GARDENERS' EVERYWHERE

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We're on the Web!

www.yorkcounty.gov/vce

December 2004

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2 Holiday Decorating in Yorktown, 9:30am	3	4 Yorktown Celebrates!
5 Williamsburg Grand Illumination	6 9-12, Intern Phone Training	7 9-12, Intern Phone Training	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 9:30-11:30, Monthly Program- ming Mtg, St. Lukes Methodist Church-Christmas Get together	15 9-12, Intern Phone Training	16 WHRV 89.5 FM HearSay- Gradening Radio Show	17	18
19	20	21 Jim Orband on vacation thru Jan 4th	22 Jim Orband on vacation thru Jan 4th	23 VCE-YC Office closes at 12n. Jim on vacation thru Jan 4th	24 VCE-York Co Office closed.	25
26	27 Jim Orband on vacation thru Jan 4th	28 Jim Orband on vacation thru Jan 4th	29 Jim Orband on vacation thru Jan 4th	30 Jim Orband on vacation thru Jan 4th	31 VCE-York Co Office closed.	